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# The Sudanese Factor in the 1952–53 Anglo-Egyptian Negotiations

FADWA A. A. TAHA

The Sudanese factor rapidly developed after the signing of the 1936 Treaty between Britain and Egypt.<sup>1</sup> It became a dominant factor that complicated further the relations between the co-domini. A third legitimate party had now entered the scene of conflict and it became inevitable for both Britain and Egypt to give due weight to the Sudanese, and their growing consciousness of nationhood. While willing to use the opportunities arising from the Anglo-Egyptian dispute and rivalry, the Sudanese nationalists realized that the ultimate salvation of their country lay in their own hands and that they should organize themselves for this purpose. Several efforts were made by the nationalists to organize themselves in a unified body; this led to the formation of the Graduates General Congress in February 1938.<sup>2</sup>

However, the British-dominated Sudan Government seized the opportunity of this developing nationalism, and used it to counter Egyptian's intervention in the Sudan. With the encouragement of the Foreign Office, it committed itself to the goal of self-government for the Sudanese which it tried to implement through different means such as the Sudanization of the civil service and the development of self-government institutions. Whenever the Egyptian Government protested against this policy, the Sudan Government claimed that the training of Sudanese for self-government was within the scope of the welfare clause stated in article 11 of the 1936 Treaty.<sup>3</sup> It further insisted that it would not tolerate any alteration in the situation established by the 1899 Condominium Agreement and the 1936 treaty until the Sudanese reached a stage of development that would enable them to speak authoritatively for themselves.<sup>4</sup>

Knowing that the Sudan question would be a major reason for dispute between the co-domini in the post-war era, the nationalists had demanded as early as 1942, in the famous memorandum of the Graduates General Congress to the Governor-General, that the future of the Sudan concerns neither the British nor the Egyptians, but should be settled by the Sudanese themselves.<sup>5</sup> This view was expressed in the first demand of the memorandum that asked for the right of self-determination immediately after the war. To ask for this right in the middle of the war may indicate that the Sudanese nationalists had realized that a treaty revision was inevitable after the war. To guard against any pretext that might prevent them from participating in such negotiations, as happened with the 1936 Treaty, on the grounds that they had no organized body to represent them, the Congress had apparently wanted by this memorandum to assert the right to speak for the whole nation.

The memorandum caused a split in the Sudanese nationalist movement which was divided into two main fronts: the Unionist Parties led by the *Ashiqqa* and the Independents led by the *Umma* Party.<sup>6</sup> Nevertheless, they had all realized the necessity to participate in these negotiations, and their efforts resulted in the formation of a delegation that left for Cairo for this purpose on 1 April 1946.

A formula was, however, needed to unite the efforts of all the politically-conscious Sudanese to secure their common demand to have a say in determining the future of their country in those negotiations. By this formula, both the *Ashiqqa* and the *Umma* Parties had made concessions. While the Independents accepted a union with Egypt, the *Ashiqqa* agreed to an alliance with Britain on condition that the form of both the union and the alliance should be decided by a free democratic Sudanese Government that would be established after independence. As historian Gabriel Warburg put it, the formula did not correspond fully with the views of the *Ashiqqa* or the Graduates' Congress, which opposed an alliance with Britain and foresaw the formation of a Sudanese democratic government in a union with Egypt under the Egyptian crown.<sup>7</sup> By 1 April 1946, a united Sudanese delegation had consequently arrived at Cairo to demand 'the formation in the Sudan of a free democratic government in union with Egypt and alliance with Britain'.<sup>8</sup>

The delegation failed to obtain the recognition of the co-domini. The presence of the delegation in Cairo – before its split – was, in fact, as J. Robertson, Civil Secretary, Sudan Government, said, an embarrassment to the British,<sup>9</sup> as they had no reasonable argument to justify their refusal to recognize it. Confronted with the presence of the delegation in Cairo, R. Campbell, the British ambassador in Cairo, had sought the advice of the Foreign Office and the Sudan Government on the matter. His main worry was that the refusal to allow the delegation to participate in the negotiations could be disastrous. Though asserting that the leadership of the strongly pro-Egyptian Azhari to this delegation might weaken it, Campbell admitted that the widely representative character of the delegation could not be ignored.<sup>10</sup>

Besides this, Campbell felt that any suppressive action against the delegation would weaken the position of the Sudan Government and prejudice its declared policy of consulting the Sudanese through constitutional channels.<sup>11</sup> The Sudan Government had, however, strongly opposed any official recognition to this delegation on the ground that it represents a small section of the community only, i.e. the elite. The Governor-General minuted in this respect:

While it is the alleged intention of the deputation to put their view point before the negotiations, there is nothing to show that the negotiations have agreed to see, or are likely to see, a deputation for which they have not asked, and which is unrepresentative of any but a small section of the community.<sup>12</sup>

The next blow to the unity of the delegation came from Egypt. The insistence by the Egyptian Government on unity had alienated the *Umma* Party, and its representatives in the delegation returned home leaving in Cairo the pro-unity members only.

The inability of the Sudanese elite to participate in these negotiations was presumably an important factor for their failure. Both the British and the Egyptian Governments were reluctant to allow this. But the 1946–47 negotiations<sup>13</sup> and

subsequent events indicated that the future of the Sudan could not be decided without the participation of the Sudanese in any negotiations dealing with the Sudan question, a fact grasped by the military leaders of the coup of 23 July 1952.

The decision of the Egyptian Government to refer its case to the United Nation's Security Council was welcomed by the educated Sudanese – whether Unionists or Independents – as this would transfer the Sudan question from a limited Anglo-Egyptian concern to an international problem in which many countries would be involved. When Egypt made its appeal to the Security Council there was a unionist delegation in Cairo. This delegation travelled from Cairo to Lake Success. While the previous Sudanese delegation that was sent to Cairo was united and had common objectives, two rival delegates had gone to the Security Council.<sup>14</sup> Before the departure of the two separate delegations there were attempts at reunification, but they failed.<sup>15</sup> On 2 August representatives of the two fronts met and drafted a statement calling for an end to the Condominium, establishment of a Sudanese Government which would itself decide the country's future status, and an end to Anglo-Egyptian negotiations. When the draft was submitted to the party organizations, however, the Unionists insisted on amendments calling for complete evacuation by the British. The *Umma* refused the changes, and discussions broke down.<sup>16</sup>

The Security Council, had, however, finally decided to shelve the whole Anglo-Egyptian dispute. As far as the Sudan is concerned, the most important outcome of this discussion seems to have been that it gave the chance to other countries to express their views on the future of the Sudan. While Poland and other states had opposed the Egyptian theory of sovereignty over the Sudan by the right of conquest, others, e.g. the Soviet Union, China, Australia, and France, felt that it would be difficult to take any decision on the Sudan question because no adequate information was available on the real aspirations of the Sudanese people.<sup>17</sup>

In fact the period prior to the military coup in Egypt of 23 July 1952 witnessed an intense development of Sudanese nationalism, and it became evident that the future of the Sudan could only be decided with the active involvement of the Sudanese nationalists. The Anglo-Egyptian controversy on the Sudan question had stimulated political consciousness in the Sudan. Though the *Umma* and the *Ashiqqa* parties remained the dominant political forces in the Sudan, other political groups had emerged after 1947. The development of the labour movement and the birth of the leftist group, the Sudanese Movement for National Liberation added to the frustration of the Sudan Government. The *Ashiqqa* continued their boycott of self-government institutions of the Sudan Government.

Though the *Wafd* Government of 1950–52 had managed to stay in office longer than others, it was unable to solve the Egyptian question. The hesitation of the *Wafd* may be seen from the fact that it took it a whole year to announce the decision that it took in November 1950 to abrogate the Condominium Agreements of 1899 and the 1936 Treaty.<sup>18</sup> As far as the Sudanese nationalists were concerned, the abrogation of the treaties was a retrograde step.<sup>19</sup> They felt that it was contradictory and unfair on the part of the Egyptian Government to abrogate the 1936 Treaty as a protest against the British presence in Egypt, and to impose at the same time the Egyptian Crown on the Sudanese people without consulting them. Incidentally, even those who had unionist tendencies were not consulted. This imposition appeared to have

also been unpopular internationally. A *New York Times* article criticized this Egyptian action by asserting that the declaration of annexation would defeat its ends. What really mattered, the newspaper added, was what the Sudanese themselves wanted and that there would be no gain to the cause of human liberty in their mere transfer against their will from one colonialism to another.<sup>20</sup>

This abrogation took place while the British Government was pressed by the American Government to make concessions for Egypt in the Sudan to facilitate the way for the formation of a Middle East Command to combat the influence of the USSR.<sup>21</sup> However, the unilateral abrogation of the Condominium Agreements and the 1936 Treaty did not solve the Egyptian question, which had, in fact, become much more complicated by mid-1952. The determination of the Sudanese nationalists for self-government and self-determination became the stumbling block that prevented an Anglo-Egyptian understanding over the Sudan, and consequently the military issue. This fact was apparently grasped shortly before the military coup by Egyptian Premier Nagib al-Hilali who invited a delegation of the Independents for consultation in Cairo.<sup>22</sup> Though unsuccessful, this attempt was presumably a step forward in the direction of consulting the Sudanese people that was taken up afterwards by the leaders of the military coup. Hilali's approach was also not as traditional as that of his predecessors in another respect, namely his acceptance of the Sudanese right of self-determination provided that they accept nominal Egyptian sovereignty during the interim period before self-determination.<sup>23</sup>

The military leaders' offer to enable the Sudanese to determine their own future was the result of King Farouq's deposition, on the one hand, and of the more realistic policy suggested by them.<sup>24</sup> This realistic and practical approach, however, did not come out of a vacuum but was presumably affected by prior developments in Egypt. It was natural for the new leaders to treat the Sudan question as one of their priorities and to give due attention to the questions of evacuation of British troops and the rapid decline in Egypt's internal conditions. Though the leaders of the coup were obliged to follow a different line from that of their predecessors, they had, however, initially adopted a reserved and cautious attitude which made it difficult to understand their intentions particularly with regard to the Sudan question. Until the beginning of September 1952 they permitted a civilian government headed by 'Ali Mahir to rule the country, though this government was not delegated much authority and vital decision-making remained with the Revolutionary Command Council (RCC). Though Nagib<sup>25</sup> had maintained that this government was assumed to be dealing with the two issues of evacuation and the Sudan the RCC had actually held a meeting in mid-August 1952 to discuss urgent matters concerning the Sudan.<sup>26</sup> This seems reasonable as nothing much was expected from 'Ali Mahir who was reported to have asserted that Egypt and the Sudan should be united and that the Sudanese should be granted home-rule only.<sup>27</sup>

Salah Salim had, however, claimed that at this meeting the RCC felt that they had two alternatives: either to continue the old negative policy of objecting to the Self-Government Statute<sup>28</sup> or to concentrate their efforts to amend the Statute in a way which would delegate more authority to the Sudanese instead of the Governor-General, and to recognize the Sudanese right of self-determination.<sup>29</sup> Since the

second choice was considered to be preferable, the meeting decided to contact the Sudanese political parties to unite them in a way that would support the Egyptians' stand in the coming negotiations with the British Government.<sup>30</sup> Indeed the military leaders felt that their new policy would enable them to gain the confidence of the Sudanese people, which was vital for their basic interests in the Sudan, particularly the security of the Nile Waters. Considering a settlement for the Sudan Question to be a step forward towards the solution of the strategic issue, the military leaders had therefore decided to separate them from each other. They felt that the previous insistence to link them together was deliberately planned by King Farouq to prevent a successful conclusion of any negotiations with Britain. He had apparently wanted to keep British troops in Egypt so that they would come to his aid in case of a popular rising against his rule.<sup>31</sup>

Though the military leaders had apparently formulated their ideas about the Sudan from mid-August, they did not communicate them officially to the British Government, as was expected by the latter. Since the Self-Government Statute was presented by the Sudan Government to the co-domini on 8 May 1952, the British Government was waiting for the Egyptian reply. But the military leaders seemed to have decided to overlook this early communication and to wait for a fresh one. Apart from this, they were preoccupied with domestic problems until September. Nagib himself was reported to have said to Stevenson, the British ambassador in Cairo, that his government was so engaged in internal affairs that it was impossible to deal at that time with questions of foreign relations.<sup>32</sup>

In spite of the cautious attitude of the military leaders towards the Sudan Question and the urgency of improving the internal conditions of Egypt, they could not shelve the matter any longer. If they did not declare their policy towards the Sudan, the Sudan Government was expected to go ahead and implement the Statute. Stevenson had actually hinted at this and urged the RCC to submit its proposals on the Statute immediately, though some of its members had appealed for time to study the question.<sup>33</sup>

Nevertheless, the military leaders seemed to have given some indication of the nature of their policy towards the Sudan,<sup>34</sup> during private discussions that they had with American and British diplomats. They referred there to their intention to adopt a practical approach towards the Sudan question.<sup>35</sup>

The British proposals regarding the Self-Government Statute were formally presented by Stevenson to Nagib on 24 September 1952. By then the Egyptian Government had decided to consult the Sudanese political parties before giving their reply to these proposals. The Sudan Government informed the Foreign Office on 22 September that the Egyptian Prime Minister had already sent a personal invitation to Sayyid 'Abd al-Rahman to visit Cairo, and had also invited other politicians.<sup>36</sup>

The determination of the Egyptian Government to consult the Sudanese political parties was presumably motivated by its desire to isolate the Sudan Government and to reveal that it was not genuine in its pretence of protecting the Sudanese right for self-government and self-determination. The Egyptian Government was also aware of the strength of the national movement in the Sudan which would no longer accept

their future to be an issue for bargaining between the co-domini. Instead, the demand of the Sudanese people that they should be allowed to decide their own future gained sympathy from various quarters. After the Wafd's abrogation of the treaties in November 1951, *The World Today* commented:

It seems clear that in reaching any future decision the United Nations will be moved far more by the wishes of the Sudanese themselves (in so far as they can be satisfactorily ascertained), than by the *de facto* situations created in 1882 or 1881–85 or 1898–99.<sup>37</sup>

Since the Sudan Government had consistently claimed that a sizeable section of the Sudanese population was against Egyptian claims in the Sudan, the Egyptian Government was apparently advised in its own interests to seek an understanding with this group. When inviting Sayyid 'Abd al-Rahman to visit Cairo, Salah Salim argued that an understanding with the Sudanese leaders who were traditionally opposing Egypt was essential to isolate them from Britain and consequently frustrate Britain's anti-Egyptian policies in the Sudan.<sup>38</sup>

To give priority to conversing with the traditionally anti-Egyptian Independence Front led by the *Umma* Party was apparently an obvious move for the new Egyptian Government. For the Front had consistently refused any concessions to Egypt, and collaborated with the Sudan Government's institutions. Indeed it supported the Self-Government Statute when it was discussed by the Legislative Assembly in April 1952.<sup>39</sup>

On the other hand the Independent Front seemed ready to talk with the new Egyptian Government on the basis of their declared principles. As mentioned above, this new Egyptian approach to the Sudan Question was initiated by Hilali. Sayyid 'Abd al-Rahman was about to leave for Cairo when the military coup took place, and some members of al-Sayyid's delegation were actually there when it occurred.<sup>40</sup> By then the Independents seemed to have been manoeuvring and trying to play the co-domini against each other. For despite their declining relations with the Sudan Government, they did not take a definite stand with regard to its institutions. They appear to have been reluctantly willing to contest the elections according to the Statute if they did not get a satisfactory response from the new Egyptian leaders. By such manoeuvres they also seemed to have hoped to persuade the Sudan Government to give concessions that are reconcilable with their demands. Robertson had precisely described this shrewd manoeuvres by minuting: 'It seemed clear that the old man<sup>41</sup> is trying to keep with both sides. He does not want to lose the British, even though he is really playing us off against the Egyptians.'<sup>42</sup>

The purpose of Sayyid 'Abd al-Rahman's visit to London on 9 October 1952 was therefore declared to be his desire to persuade the British Government to approve the Statute quickly. The announcement of his intention to visit Britain coincided with the Egyptian Government's decision to consult the Sudanese political parties. Sayyid 'Abd al-Rahman was, therefore, invited to visit Cairo on his way to London or on his way back. According to Taha, Sayyid 'Abd al-Rahman and the Egyptian Government agreed to visit London first and then Cairo.<sup>43</sup> This seems to have been a tactical move on both sides. Since al-Sayyid's relations with the British were less than harmonious, he might have regarded this visit as a last attempt to know the

maximum that the British were willing to offer and then compare it with the Egyptian Government's proposals. On the other hand, the Egyptian Government had apparently hoped that it would be able to know al-Sayyid's exact position vis-à-vis the British. This can be shown from what Sayyid 'Abd al-Rahman mentioned to Nagib when they met in Cairo. Though unhappy with the results of his visit to London, the Sayyid told Nagib of Britain's intention shortly to declare its support for the Statute. In reply Nagib told Sayyid 'Abd al-Rahman that Egypt had made up its mind to offer the Sudanese a far better constitution, and asked him to form an Independent's delegation to negotiate with the Egyptian Government along these lines.<sup>44</sup>

Both the British and the Sudan Governments were alarmed by Sayyid 'Abd al-Rahman's visit to London and Cairo, each for its own reasons. While not disapproving visits to both countries, the British Government wanted the Sayyid to visit Cairo before London. Being reluctant to publicly approve the Statute before giving the Egyptian Government a chance to consider its proposals, the British Government felt that al-Sayyid's stop in Cairo would give them valuable time to obtain Egypt's reply. They could then make their statement before the Sayyid's departure to London and thus calm the fears of the *Khatmiyya* and persuade them to participate in the proposed elections under the Statute. This was of course based on the assumption that the new Egyptian leaders would follow the steps of their predecessors and insist on the unity of the Nile Valley. But the new realistic and tactical Egyptian approach that accepted Sudanese demands for self-government and self-determination appeared to have taken the British completely by surprise. They apparently expected that nothing new would materialize from the invitations that the Egyptians extended to the Independents and other Sudanese political parties.

On the other hand, the Sudan Government seemed to have discouraged Sayyid 'Abd al-Rahman's visit to Egypt. Before his departure to London, they told the Foreign Office that the Sayyid might decide not to visit Egypt on his return journey as the *Umma* Party was wary of his involvement in political discussions without the support of the *Umma* leaders.<sup>45</sup> But this is presumably misleading as the Sayyid's delegation to London consisted of Sidiq al-Mahdi, President of the *Umma* Party, as well as several other prominent leaders of the party. Apart from this, a delegation of Independents was already in Cairo.

Sayyid 'Abd al-Rahman had, in fact, planned to use his expected visit to Egypt to press for the best deal that he could have from the British Government. When asking for direct elections throughout northern Sudan, he pointed out that the Egyptian Government might offer this, and it would then be very attractive.<sup>46</sup> For this reason he maintained that he had come to hear the views of the Secretary of State before visiting Egypt. To persuade Sayyid 'Abd al-Rahman, the Secretary of State told him of the British intention to approve the Statute, and read him the amendments which the British Government intended to incorporate in it. It seems that Sayyid 'Abd al-Rahman did not find this appealing, and he was particularly unhappy with the fact that nothing in the Statute would affect the legal responsibility of the Governor-General to the British and Egyptian Governments. Taha expressed his fear that this amendment might be held in the Sudan to reaffirm and consolidate the Condominium Rule.<sup>47</sup> The amendments were also disappointing as they did not

refer to a fixed date for self-determination. When Sayyid 'Abd al-Rahman protested against this, the Secretary of State replied that this matter should be reserved for the new Parliament to decide on. The outcome of Sayyid 'Abd al-Rahman's visit to London was therefore not positive as he failed to receive definite answers to important points that he had raised. In fact Sayyid 'Abd al-Rahman was disappointed as he failed to commit the British to a definite date for self-determination and for a final decision on the issue of direct elections.

When Sayyid 'Abd al-Rahman arrived in Cairo on 20 October 1952, the Egyptian Government asked him to form an Independents' delegation to negotiate with them. The role of the Independents who were already in Cairo, 'Ahmed Yousif Hashim, Muhammed Salih al-Shingiti, and Muhammad 'Ahmad Mahgoub, was that they explained the Front's view to the Egyptian Government at several meetings that they had with Nagib. The Sudanese newspapers referred to them as 'Sayyid 'Abd al-Rahman's delegation in Egypt'.<sup>48</sup> They made great efforts to lay the general basis for negotiating with the Egyptian Government. They contacted Nagib immediately after the coup, and a note embodying their remarks on the Statute was submitted to him at his request.<sup>49</sup> The fact that Sayyid 'Abd al-Rahman arrived on 20 October 1952 and that negotiations started after only three days<sup>50</sup> and continued for less than a week (until 29 October) may further support the view that this delegation had played a major role in paving the way for the historic agreement between Egypt and the Independence Front. Mahjoub stated:

We were delighted to negotiate with Neguib who was born and partly educated in the Sudan and had strong personal connections with our country. With him was Ali Mahir Pasha, a veteran politician who had been appointed Prime Minister. Mahir Pasha welcomed our ideas and promised to take action on them. In addition to our meetings with General Naguib, we met members of the Revolutionary Council and Commanders of the Armed Forces, explaining the Sudan problem and enabling them to grasp the practicability of an amicable agreement satisfactory to all parties.<sup>51</sup>

The first official meeting between the Egyptian Government and the Independents' delegation took place on 23 October. Negotiations were confined to the transfer of the Governor-General's powers to the Sudanese with the exception of his special responsibilities to the south, the amendments of the electoral law to provide for direct elections in northern Sudan, and the fixing of a definite date for self-determination. Apart from the significance of the above-mentioned preliminary conversations in cutting short the course of negotiations, the Egyptian side seemed to have been willing to give substantial concessions from the outset. This seriousness can also be seen from the timing of the presentation of the Egyptian Note to the British Government that was sent on 2 November 1952, i.e. only three days after the conclusion of the agreement with the Independents on 29 October. This may suggest that the Egyptian Government had made up its mind before its official negotiations with the Independents' delegation to recognize the Sudan's right to self-government and self-determination. What they had probably intended to achieve from these negotiations was to commit the Independents to the suggested amendments to the

Statute. This argument may be further supported by the fact that Nagib informed Sayid ‘Abd al-Rahman on his arrival in Cairo of Egypt’s intention to give the Sudanese a better constitution. This is also evident in the firm stand taken against ‘Abd al-Razag al-Sanhouri,<sup>52</sup> an old-fashioned member of the Egyptian delegation, who protested during the first meeting of 23 October against the reservation of sovereignty for the Sudanese people. Alarmed by this move, on 23 October the Independents’ delegation sent an official letter of protest to the Prime Minister who reacted by promptly dismissing Sanhouri from the delegation.<sup>53</sup>

The brief negotiations of 23–29 October concentrated on discussing the amendments to the Statute. The Governor-General’s special responsibilities to the south were an area of contention between the Egyptian and the Independents’ delegation. The note presented by the Independents to Nagib before Sayid ‘Abd al-Rahman’s arrival in Cairo had confirmed these responsibilities. This was, however, compatible with the stand they took on this issue during the discussions of the Statute in the Legislative Assembly. Though agreeing finally to the reservation of these responsibilities, some Independent members had, however, argued against them and remarked that the appearance of words such as ‘the south’ and ‘southerners’ were unnecessary and not in the best interests of the country.<sup>54</sup> But the conflicting views over the southern issue were not a serious threat to these negotiations. Having secured major concessions from the Egyptian side, i.e. reservation of sovereignty for the Sudanese and recognition of the Sudanese right of self-determination, which they failed to obtain during the discussions of the Statute by the Legislative Assembly, the Independents showed readiness to yield on this point.

In the agreement signed on 29 October 1952, the Egyptian Government gave major concessions such as the right of self-government and self-determination and the reservation of sovereignty for the Sudanese until they could decide their future. This was indeed a victory for the Independence Front that had consistently and adamantly opposed any form of Egyptian’s sovereignty over the Sudan, apart from the fact that this proved to be a thorny issue between the co-domini. A transitional period, not exceeding three years, was agreed upon to enable the Sudanese to establish complete self-government and to achieve the free and unprejudiced atmosphere necessary for self-determination.<sup>55</sup>

The attainment of these objectives made it necessary for both sides to amend the Statute. The Governor-General had been confirmed as the supreme constitutional power in the Sudan during the transitional period, aided by a commission of five. Three matters were, however, not to be dealt with by this commission and had to be referred by the Governor-General to the co-domini: external affairs, amendments suggested by the Sudanese Parliament to be introduced into the Statute and decisions taken by the commission which the Governor-General may regard as trespassing on his responsibilities.<sup>56</sup>

The Independents were also satisfied with regard to the procedure to be followed in the elections as they would be direct throughout the Sudan with the exception of Southern Provinces.<sup>57</sup> An Electoral Commission was to be set up to supervise the forthcoming elections as well as a commission to speed up the Sudanization of the administration. The latter was, of course, a prerequisite for the realization of the conditions necessary for self-determination.

This agreement was indeed significant and historic. For it proved the importance of the Sudanese factor in settling the Anglo-Egyptian controversy over the Sudan and isolated both the British and the Sudan Government.

The Egyptian Government also extended an invitation to the Socialist Republican Party on 30 September. This, was, however, a setback to the Sudan Government, which encouraged the formation of this party to counter the influence of the *Umma* Party, and to attract the support of the *Khatmiyya* who were suspicious of the monarchial ambitions of Sayyid 'Abd al-Rahman. The Sudan Government had been extremely worried by the continuous *Umma* demand for self-government and self-determination, and had consequently relied in the main on tribal opinion to resist it. It was therefore considered essential to organize this force into a political party, an idea that the British had actually entertained before 1951.<sup>58</sup> The delay in the formation of this party was perhaps mainly due to the persistent desire of the government to seek the support and participation of the pro-*Khatmiyya* political groups in the Assembly.<sup>59</sup> The failure of the numerous attempts to secure this and the disintegration of the Constitutional Amendment Commission<sup>60</sup> had apparently finally revived the idea to form the party and gave it a new momentum.<sup>61</sup>

It would have been difficult for the Socialist Republican Party to reject Cairo's invitation, since the two important factions of the national movement, the Independents and the Unionist Parties had welcomed it. This newly-formed party might have felt that its acceptance of this invitation could increase its popularity and counter the accusation that it was a British tool.

Negotiations with the Socialist Republican Party started on 8 October 1952,<sup>62</sup> two weeks before those with the Independents, but an agreement was only concluded with this party on 3 November 1952. By then the Egyptian Government had already made up its mind to give major concessions to the Sudanese, a fact that became clear during the second meeting of 9 October in which it presented its suggested amendments to the Statute. Differences on these amendments concentrated on the Governor-General's special responsibilities to the south, direct elections and the issue of Sudanization.

Concerning the south, the Socialist Republican Party opposed the omission of the Governor-General's special responsibilities to the south, arguing that the party's members in the Legislative Assembly were convinced after lengthy discussions and debates in the Assembly that it was imperative to keep these responsibilities intact if the unity of the Sudan were to be maintained. The Socialist Republican Party's delegates claimed that their party was bound to insist on safeguards for the south as it was the only party in which part of southern Sudan was represented.<sup>63</sup> The party's insistence on the Governor-General's special responsibilities to the south stemmed from the fact that southerners had still their doubts about the intentions of the northerners and therefore welcomed the presence of the British administrators.

The Socialist Republican Party argued that the rather poor degree of general awakening and sophistication in certain parts of the Sudan made it impossible to hold direct elections throughout northern Sudan.<sup>64</sup> As for Sudanization, the difference between the two sides was not on the principle itself, but on its timing. The

Socialist Republican Party felt that hasty Sudanization, particularly in technical posts, would paralyze the administration.<sup>65</sup>

The agreement with the Socialist Republican Party was, however, negotiated in Cairo, though signed in Omdurman on 3 November 1952, a day after the handing of the Egyptian Note to the British Government. The representatives of the party did not want to commit themselves to an agreement until they had consulted their colleagues at home. After their return to Khartoum on 23 October a meeting of the party's committee was held to discuss this matter.<sup>66</sup>

The agreement of 3 November differed from that concluded with the Independent Front on three points; while the Independents had agreed to delete the part in the Statute that dealt with the Governor-General's special responsibilities to the south, the Socialist Republican Party insisted on keeping them and actually excluded them from the Governor-General's responsibilities.<sup>67</sup> This insistence makes it difficult to accept H. Sabri's assertion that Ibrahim Badri, leader of the Socialist Republican Party, proposed the immediate replacement of the Governor-General by a three-man commission composed of an Egyptian, a Briton, and a Sudanese.<sup>68</sup> Sabri later contradicted himself when he mentioned that the amendments proposed in their Note, which included the establishment of a five-member commission to curtail the extensive powers of the Governor-General, was shown to the Sudanese delegations in Cairo, though they did not formally approve it.<sup>69</sup> This statement indicates that it was the Egyptian Government not Ibrahim Badri who had actually initiated the suggestion of the Governor-General's Commission.

The Socialist Republican Party's agreement with Egypt provided for the establishment of a Sudanization Commission, but no definite time was given for the completion of its work. It vaguely stated that it should be as soon as possible.

In their agreement with Egypt the Independents pressed for direct elections throughout northern Sudan. They had presumably felt that the Socialist Republican Party might, through the influence of tribal leaders and British officials, attain at their expense better results in indirect elections.<sup>70</sup> In its agreement with Egypt the Socialist Republican Party stuck to its earlier proposal on the issue.

As was the case with the Independents, the Socialist Republican Party authorized the Egyptian Government to include its proposed amendments to the Statute, on which agreement had been reached. It is worth mentioning here that the Egyptians had in fact ignored the views of the Socialist Republican Party with regard to the south, Sudanization and direct elections. The Egyptian Note was on the whole similar to their agreement with the Independent Front. This was, however, later exploited by the Sudan Government to complicate the negotiations, particularly as the Socialist Republican Party's three reservations proved to be thorny issues during the Anglo-Egyptian negotiations. However, as will be shown, the Egyptian Government was subsequently compelled to sign another agreement with the Sudanese political parties in order to deprive the Sudan Government of the pretext it had used to obstruct the negotiations, namely the variations in the documents signed in Cairo with these parties.

An invitation by the Egyptian Government was also extended to the Unionist Parties. These were the *Ashiqqa* which were divided into two factions (Azhari and

Nur al-Dein), the National Front Party, the Unionists, the Liberal Unionists (*Al-Ahrar al-Ittihadiyyun*) and Unity of the Nile Valley Party (*Hizb Wuhdat Wadi al-Nil*).

When the coup took place in Egypt the Unionists were still maintaining their stand of boycotting the Sudan Government's institutions. A Unionist delegation proceeded to London to counter Sayyid 'Abd al-Rahman's visit, and to demonstrate their opposition to the Statute which Sayyid 'Abd al-Rahman was anxious to persuade the British Government to approve.<sup>71</sup> Being keen to enlist the cooperation of other factions of the national movement, the Sudan Government advised that the Secretary of State should meet the delegation and try to impress on it that all parties should contest the forthcoming elections.<sup>72</sup> But this was not achieved because the delegation criticized the Statute as being unrepresentative of Sudanese wishes.<sup>73</sup> On the whole the visit did not change the Unionist parties' stand, particularly as it had occurred after Egypt's formal invitations to them to come to Cairo for negotiations.

Negotiations with Unionist parties were not, however, difficult as they, like the Egyptian Government, were against British rule in the Sudan and the Governor-General's extensive powers. When negotiating with these parties, the Egyptian Government had two aims: to work out something acceptable to all Sudanese political parties, and to amalgamate all Unionist parties into one. Indeed this was particularly important for Egypt during the forthcoming parliamentary elections.

Though these parties were finally united, as the National Unionist Party (NUP), on 3 November 1952, they worked in close association with the Egyptian Government during the negotiations.<sup>74</sup> In these negotiations the Egyptian Government offered its recognition of the Sudanese right for self-government and self-determination and suggested a five-member commission to restrict the Governor-General's powers. Initially the Unionist parties declined to accept the Governor-General's presence during the transitional period. They argued that the Sudanese profound mistrust of the British administration made it essential that no such absolute powers should be vested in a single British official especially during the vital transitional period. They, however, suggested a 'Delegated Committee' to consist of a Briton, an Egyptian and two Sudanese, in which the supreme constitutional authority during the transitional period should be vested.<sup>75</sup> Its chairman should exercise the duties of the head of the state as mentioned in the Statute with the exception of the discretionary powers which had to be the responsibility of the committee collectively.<sup>76</sup>

It was not surprising that the Unionist parties protested against the Governor-General's special responsibilities in the south as they had continuously accused the Sudan Government of having deliberately adopted a separatist policy there. They argued that the interest of the southern Sudanese people could only be secured by the formation of a Sudanese cabinet.<sup>77</sup> Similarly they objected to indirect elections as the Sudan Government was expected to prejudice their results.

The Independent Front and the Socialist Republican Party rejected the idea of a 'Delegated Committee' as suggested by the Unionist parties and were satisfied by the Egyptian proposal of a five-member commission to assist the Governor-General. Since the general trend among various groups was to cater for principles rather than details, the Unionist parties eventually gave way on this issue and accepted as a minimum what came in the agreement with the Independents.<sup>78</sup> No formal agreement was therefore signed between Egypt and the Unionist parties, which

were satisfied by merely stating the general principles in a dual declaration signed on 1 November.<sup>79</sup> On 3 November 1952 the formation of the National Unionist Party was announced.<sup>80</sup>

The Sudan Government was apprehensive that these extensive deliberations in Cairo might delay Egypt's reply to the Self-Government Statute. Nagib himself had repeatedly mentioned that such a delay was inevitable and insisted that Egypt would not send its reply before consultation with all Sudanese political parties.<sup>81</sup> The Sudan Government had apparently felt that this was a waste of time as it had erroneously believed that no agreement could materialize from these discussions. This presumably stemmed from the fear that the Egyptian Government might come out with far-reaching proposals that would inevitably delay the promulgation of the Statute.

The Sudan Government seemed to have also been haunted by the fear that the Egyptian Government could seize this opportunity to offer concessions on issues that had led to sharp differences between it and the Independents during the previous discussions of the Statute in the Legislative Assembly.<sup>82</sup> To guard against this and to undermine the role of the Sudanese political parties in future negotiations, the Sudan Government was quick to point out the shortcomings. It maintained, for example, that Cairo negotiations did not represent tribal opinion and the southern Sudan. It is probably reasonable to question the Sudan Government's sincerity in this as it had already argued that the Socialist Republican Party represented tribal opinion in northern Sudan at least.

Concerning the south, it is true that the Egyptian Government did not invite any southerner to Cairo. This may have been due to the fact that southerners were not represented in the northern parties and at that time had no parties of their own.<sup>83</sup> But this cannot be accepted as an explanation for the exclusion of the southerners from these consultations. The Egyptian Government could have approached some southern chiefs or members of the Legislative Assembly for this purpose. They had, however, apparently realized this mistake after the beginning of Anglo-Egyptian negotiations and particularly as the Governor-General's special responsibilities to the south proved to be a thorny problem. Northern Sudanese political parties do not seem to have been very keen at that time on southern representation in Cairo negotiations as the general trend among the southern members in the Assembly was to delay self-government and self-determination until the south reached the level of development that prevailed in the north.<sup>84</sup> Socialist Republican Party had, however, told Nagib that it spoke on behalf of the south.<sup>85</sup> They claimed this position as southern members in the Legislative Assembly shared the tribal leaders' view regarding postponement of self-determination, and these tribal leaders were the backbone of the Socialist Republican Party when it was formed in November 1951.

In a moment of dismay and shock, the Sudan Government dismissed these agreements and claimed that they would not even be binding on leading *Ansar* or *Khatmiyya* personalities.<sup>86</sup> But this appears to have been untrue. On the contrary their signature was widely welcomed by large sections of the Sudanese people. The Governor-General himself did not believe what happened. For he said, 'I hope General Neguib can be warned of this and that he will not commit himself to a position from which he cannot withdraw.'<sup>87</sup> The Governor-General was particularly

alarmed by the proposed commission that would shortly restrict his powers and consequently deprive Britain of its monopoly over the Sudan administration.<sup>88</sup>

What alarmed the Sudan Government more than anything else was the new though temporary cooperation between Egypt and the *Umma* Party which had traditionally sided with Britain. It was very difficult to resist the collective stand of the Egyptian Government and the Sudanese political parties. Its outcome was the famous Egyptian Note that was handed to the British Government on 2 November 1952.

Following its agreements with the Sudanese political parties, the Egyptian Government found itself in a strong position to proceed with its new practical approach to the Sudan question, which was fundamentally different from that of the British. It was embodied in the Egyptian Note presented to the British Government on 2 November 1952 which put the latter in a dilemma of either accepting the proposed major amendments in the Self-Government Statute or rejecting them, and thus complicate the settlement of the Sudan question and consequently the strategic issue. The British Government had, however, opted to begin negotiations on the whole issue which had actually started on 20 November, and their first phase ended by mid-December 1952. Due to sharp differences between the two sides over the Governor-General's special responsibilities to the south and other issues, negotiations were postponed for almost a month, and the second phase commenced on 12 January 1953.

This Note embodied the views of the Egyptian Government as well as those of the Sudanese political parties that were accepted by the Egyptian side. These were mainly the principles of self-government and self-determination, while the question of sovereignty was reserved for the Sudanese until they could decide their future. The Socialist Republican Party's insistence on keeping the Governor-General's special responsibilities to the south was not included.

The Egyptian Note had embarrassed the British Government as it expressed for the first time Egypt's explicit recognition of the Sudanese right of self-determination and its readiness to see this through before 1956. This had indeed deprived the British of an important pretext, namely the persistent refusal of all previous Egyptian governments to do this. It now became very difficult for Britain to refuse this, or any other similar proposal in the Egyptian Note as it had always alleged its support to the Sudanese right of self-determination. The Note's provision for a fixed date for self-determination had furthermore disturbed both the Foreign Office and the Colonial Office as this might encourage other colonies to ask for the same concession.<sup>89</sup> The support given by the Sudanese political parties to this Note had, moreover, further complicated Britain's position and made it very difficult for it to ignore this collective stand and go ahead with its proposed Statute.

The Sudan Government's bargaining position had become extremely difficult after Egypt's success in concluding agreements with the Sudanese political parties, particularly the Independents and the Socialist Republican Party. It now became awkward to argue against the amendments suggested by the Egyptian Note since they were all endorsed in these agreements. This deprived the Sudan Government of its long-standing, but misleading, assertion that a sizeable section of the Sudanese national movement supported its plans for gradually attaining self-government and self-determination. It had, however, tried to impress the Foreign Office that the

Egyptian Note did not represent the views of all the Sudanese by arguing that it was only after its submission that the Egyptian Government had concluded its agreement with the Socialist Republican Party that was actually signed on 3 November 1952. It had even questioned the authenticity, validity and reliability of these agreements, though in them various Sudanese political parties had clearly authorized the Egyptian Government to convey their views to the British Government.<sup>90</sup> Nevertheless, it seems likely that privately the Sudan Government was well aware that the Egyptian Note had a great deal of support from the Sudanese political parties. The following is quoted from Robertson's papers: 'There is no doubt that a greater emotional unity prevail amongst all the political parties in Khartoum than has ever been known before, and this is partly due to the fact that some of the politically conscious groups believe that they have scored a great triumph in Cairo.'<sup>91</sup> Anglo-Egyptian negotiations for the conclusion of the 1953 Agreement had officially started on 20 November 1952. During these negotiations the British side insisted on the retention of Article 100 in the Statute about the Governor-General's special responsibilities to the south, though the Governor-General could consult his commission and the co-domini acting together could shelve the Governor-General's decision. They, however, expected the Independents to support this view as they did during the discussions of the Statute in the Legislative Assembly, though the National Unionist Party might follow the Egyptian lead. But the Independents had by then insisted on the abolition of Article 100. Indeed some of them had openly asked for this in the Assembly itself on the grounds that the provision of any safeguards for the south would create a regime that would not be under the full control of the Sudanese Prime Minister.<sup>92</sup>

However, both the Foreign Office and the Embassy were of the opinion that the view of the Sudanese political parties should be the decisive factor in keeping or abolishing these special safeguards. This may be seen from the weight they attached to a visit to the south intended to be undertaken in mid-December 1952 by the leaders of the political parties. Both the Foreign Office and the Sudan Government hoped that this visit would persuade the political parties to retain Article 100, and the Governor-General had actually suggested the adjournment of the discussions until its results were known.<sup>93</sup> But these were unfounded expectations, and the political parties had in fact accused Britain of being behind some statements made by southerners in favour of these safeguards. The Foreign Office was further disturbed by a statement published in *Al-Ahram* newspaper and attributed to al-Siddiq al-Mahdi, the leader of the *Umma* Party, which described the movement in the south as being artificial and instigated by the British.<sup>94</sup> The Foreign Office seriously considered sending a personal message from the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to Sayyid 'Abd al-Rahman al-Mahdi requesting him to publicly commit himself and his party to the retention of the Governor-General's responsibilities to the south.<sup>95</sup> But this was unsuccessful as the Sayyid insisted that the presence of the British Governor-General was an adequate safeguard to the south. The Sayyid had further told the Governor-General that all Sudanese parties and groups would not compromise on this issue and that a conference could, if necessary, be called to endorse this stance.<sup>96</sup>

The Egyptians were on the other hand so sure of the support of the Independents that they expected them to boycott the elections if these responsibilities were to be

retained. Salim had definitely told the British that if the political parties remained convinced after their visit to the south that these responsibilities should be retained; the Egyptian Government would raise no objection.<sup>97</sup> By then, however, Salim was himself planning a visit to the Sudan to secure Sudanese support for his country's strong resistance to any mention of the south either in the Statute or in a joint statement.

This agreement was the Egyptian–Sudanese response to the objections raised by the British side during the course of the first phase of the negotiations. Faced by a deadlock the Egyptian Government decided, once more, to rally the support of the Sudanese political parties. Instead of inviting representatives of all Sudanese political parties to Cairo, as was the case previously, this time an Egyptian envoy was sent to the Sudan as no lengthy discussions were foreseen and the Sudanese political parties were expected to wholeheartedly and immediately support Egypt. Besides this, Egypt wanted its envoy to visit the south and secure the consent of the politically-conscious southerners to its views. By such procedure Egypt would also avoid the criticism to which it was subject during the deliberations that led to its first agreements with the Sudanese political parties, i.e. its failure to consult southerners.

Salah Salim was entrusted with this mission. He began by visiting the south and arrived there on 28 December.<sup>98</sup> The British Government had, however, encouraged this move because the south was considered to be the stumbling block in the way of an agreement.<sup>99</sup> This was particularly so after the assertion of the Sudan Government that southerners would boycott the forthcoming elections if the Governor-General's special responsibilities in the south were not maintained. The British Government had therefore hoped that Salim would realize this during his visit and consequently persuade the Egyptian Government to drop its insistence on the removal of these safeguards. But this soon proved to be a gross misreading of the situation as the southerners had in fact participated in the elections, though the safeguards were removed. Contrary to British expectations, Salim's visit had actually given the Egyptian Government fresh grounds for its insistence on their removal.

Southern enlightened opinion was alienated by its exclusion from Cairo's talks and the British administrators had exploited this to widen the gap between northerners and southerners. A delegation of northern journalists was actually roughly treated by a group of southerners during a visit that it made to the south.<sup>100</sup> Northern politicians therefore had their reservations about Salim's visit to the south and felt that in these tense circumstances it might not achieve the desired outcome. Nevertheless, Salim decided to go ahead with his visit which he insisted should be completely informal and unofficial.<sup>101</sup> As expected, this attitude annoyed the Sudan Government, which complained to the Foreign Office that Salim was intentionally avoiding listening to views with which he disagreed.<sup>102</sup> But the Foreign Office had clearly and decisively informed Khartoum that Salim's visit may be a decisive factor in its negotiations with Egypt over the Sudan during their forthcoming second phase.<sup>103</sup>

Salim was determined to communicate directly with the southern public. This was achieved through his tours of different parts of the south and his contacts with various tribes. His famous dance with the *Dinka* tribe was indeed a glaring demonstration of this insistence. Salim had, however, presumably managed to persuade some southern dignitaries, amongst whom were influential tribal leaders

and some members of the Legislative Assembly, to sign petitions in which they agreed to remove the southern safeguards.<sup>104</sup> Nagib had, however, explicitly told the British Ambassador in Cairo that two southern members of the Legislative Assembly had done so though, he complained, some of the signatories to these documents were subsequently compelled by the Sudan Government to deny this in several telegrams that they sent to the Egyptian Government.<sup>105</sup>

Once he made this breakthrough in the south, Salim managed on his return to Khartoum to finalize the 10 January agreement with the Sudanese political parties, who agreed with the Egyptian point of view regarding the two controversial issues: the south and Sudanization. The Sudan Government had, however, tried without success to convince some of the *Umma* leaders to keep the southern safeguards.<sup>106</sup> While the Unionists had supported Salim's views, the Socialist Republican Party did not. When discussions began on 6 January between Salim and the representatives of the Sudanese political parties over these issues, that party maintained its earlier stand. According to a witness of these events and a participant in the discussions, Dirdeiri Muhammad 'Uthman, Ibrahim Badri, the leader of the Socialist Republican Party, had, unlike other members of the party, adopted an uncompromising attitude.<sup>107</sup> Nevertheless, Dirdeiri claimed that he managed to convince other founding members of the party to sign. Sabri attributed Badri's intransigence to his lack of confidence in the Egyptian Government, whose neutrality he no longer accepted after Salim's campaign to amalgamate all the Unionists in the National Unionist Party.<sup>108</sup> Sabri, however, claimed that he managed to secure Badri's signature of the agreement at a later date.

The agreement signed on 10 January basically endorsed the Egyptian Government's view with regard to the south. While excluding the word 'south', a new formula was added to make the Governor-General directly responsible to the co-domini in: 'any legislation passed by the Parliament which he considers incompatible with the principle of ensuring fair and equitable treatment to all inhabitants of the different provinces of the Sudan'.<sup>109</sup> As for Sudanization, it was agreed that the remaining British and Egyptian officials should, if no qualified Sudanese were available, be replaced by neutrals as soon as the Sudanese Parliament fixed a date for self-determination.

Besides the south and Sudanization, the agreement touched on other minor points that were expected to cause difficulties during the second phase of the negotiations. Though the issue of the Governor-General's Commission was settled in principle in Phase I, the Egyptian Government managed to secure in this agreement its desire to have the explicit support of the Sudanese political parties that it should be set up before elections and that it should collectively undertake the duties of the Governor-General during his absence.

The agreement had also covered the question of the withdrawal of British and Egyptian military forces from the Sudan. The Egyptian Note of 2 November 1952 recommended their withdrawal at least one year before the election of the Constituent Assembly, though Egypt's agreements with both the Independents and the Socialist Republican Party were silent on this issue, which was also not resolved during Phase I of the negotiations. Being aware of the sensitivity of this issue, Salim managed to include in this agreement that withdrawal should take place before the election for the Constituent Assembly. Though the one year time limit was not mentioned, the

agreement provided for a new addition, namely: 'After this withdrawal the Sudanese Armed Forces should be entrusted with keeping security and public order, and the Governor-General should have no authority over these forces.'

As for direct elections, the previous suggestion of the Socialist Republican Party that elections should be direct whenever possible and practicable was maintained, but the Electoral Commission should decide on this matter.

Perhaps the most important aspect of this agreement was the political parties' pledge to boycott any elections held under a constitution that do not endorse its terms. This was indeed a further disappointment to the Sudan Government which kept asserting that the *Umma* and Socialist Republican Parties could be persuaded to participate in an election held on its terms.

The 10 January Agreement wrecked British efforts to finalize their draft agreement that was supposed to be handed over to the Egyptian Government on 12 January. Egypt was expected to reject it out rightly if it was different from their new agreement with the Sudanese political parties on basic issues: the south and Sudanization. In another attempt to break the solidarity of these parties, the Foreign Office entrusted the Sudan Government with explaining to their leaders the content of the British draft agreement.<sup>110</sup> While they remained firm and uncompromising, Sayyid 'Abd al-Rahman added that the 10 January agreement had achieved unanimity among the Sudanese which had been the declared aim of the Sudan Government for many years.<sup>111</sup> The leaders of the *Umma* and Socialist Republican Parties emphasized that their main concern was to take immediate and full advantage of the new basic concessions given by the Egyptian Government, i.e. recognition of the right of self-government and self-determination. MacMichael minuted: 'It was also very clear that the Sudanese themselves were becoming impatient for an end to all the uncertainties and eager to take the fullest advantage of the new mood in Egypt before it was changed by a further revolution and change of personalities.'<sup>112</sup>

The 10 January agreement had, furthermore, countered the allegation frequently made by the Sudan Government that earlier agreements with Sudanese political parties were different on several points from the Egyptian Note, particularly those concluded with the *Umma* and Socialist Republican Parties. The Governor-General now pessimistically commented: 'The Parties' agreement with major Salah puts us in a most serious position, and should there now be a breakdown in negotiations, it will be practically impossible for me to promulgate specific revised Statutes, which will enable elections to be held.'<sup>113</sup> He now admitted the fact that he had previously done his best to deny, namely that the Sudanese political parties were indeed the representatives of Sudanese public opinion which was delighted by the agreement which for the 'time being' ended sectarian and political strife in the country.<sup>114</sup> Though entertaining the possibility of electing a Parliament from tribal leaders and southerners, the Governor-General was not really sure of the cooperation of the former, particularly as the two Sayyids had openly supported the agreement.

The agreement of 10 January had confused both the Foreign Office and the Sudan Government and made them blame each other for the critical situation in which Britain was placed. The former accused the latter of being out of touch with the Sudanese political leaders and bitterly criticized its misleading assurances that the *Umma* and Socialist Republican Parties would not adhere to what they signed in

Cairo.<sup>115</sup> But the latter maintained that the Foreign Office should be fully responsible for this situation as it had refused its appeals to explain to the Sudanese people the issues at stake by simultaneously publishing the Statute as approved by the British Government, the Egyptian Note, and the Sudanese Political Parties' agreements. As historian M.W. Daly put it, 'Although the Sudanese parties were condemned for dealing with Egypt, most blame was reserved for the British government.'<sup>116</sup> The Foreign Office was further criticized for its failure to send representatives of the British Government to discuss the whole issue with the leaders of the Sudanese political parties at a time when the Egyptian Government had maintained close contacts with them.<sup>117</sup> The Cairo correspondent of *The Times* of London had, however, shared this view by claiming that they might have not concluded the 10 January agreement with Salim had Britain officially approached them in advance.<sup>118</sup> But it is reasonable to believe that even if such contacts had taken place they would not have drastically changed the situation as the Sudanese political parties were presumably then concerned by principles not details. Nevertheless this accusation to the Foreign Office gave the British opposition valuable ammunition to criticize and embarrass the British Government.<sup>119</sup>

The 10 January agreement added to the weakness of the British position in general. Britain's colonial power had been continuously diminishing while nationalism was progressively developing in its colonies. The following quotation from G. Warburg may adequately describe this situation:

When the Ansar were finally able to achieve their aims in agreement with Egypt's new military rulers, Britain was already on its way out. India had become independent in 1947 and Palestine had been handed over to the United Nations in the same year. Egypt's Free Officers made it quite clear that they would not tolerate British troops on Egyptian soil, and the United States was using its economic muscle to drive Britain out of the Nile Valley. If one adds to this Britain's bankruptcy following the war and the realization that it could no longer adequately police the empire, it becomes clear that there was no real alternative but to relinquish its hold on the Sudan.<sup>120</sup>

The 10 January Agreement placed the Sudan Government in particular in a very weak position. Contrary to their earlier alleged promises, they tried to persuade the Foreign Office to disregard Sudanese wishes as expressed in the Egyptian draft even if this led to the breakdown of the negotiations. The Governor-General told the Foreign Office:

If there is to be a break in the negotiations it should be now and from the Egyptian draft it seems inevitable there must be. As soon as it does come out we must be ready to act with speed and determination. A show of force and a firm attitude will greatly strengthen our position. Any hesitation or delay will result not only in losing more prestige, but will risk the development of a serious situation.<sup>121</sup>

The Governor-General had therefore requested the despatch of a battalion of troops to Khartoum with a squadron of aircraft. Armed with this show of force

he planned to call for a conference of Sudanese political leaders that would be immediately followed by general elections.<sup>122</sup> But the Foreign Office declined to accept his advice and dismissed the Governor-General's suggestion as 'Sir R. Howe's shock tactics',<sup>123</sup> for it expected that such extreme policy would be followed by troubles in the Sudan and the Canal Zone that could make an agreement over the defence issue very remote.<sup>124</sup> This difference of opinion between the Sudan Government and the British Government over this issue was summarized by Warburg in the following words: 'The British Government, under constant pressure from the United States was willing to opt out of the Sudan, and thus reach the elusive agreement with Egypt, while the Anglo-Sudanese Political service was still attempting to hang on to the Sudan.'<sup>125</sup> Being disappointed by the drastic failure of the Sudan Government in this respect, Robertson bitterly minuted: 'We have been defeated by Egypt, our own Foreign Office and Embassy, and by America – helped by the folly and short-sightedness of the Sudanese leaders.'<sup>126</sup>

Once the Agreement was concluded on 12 February 1953 the delicate process of its implementation started immediately. The Sudanese factor continued to be dominant and decisive. While each of the NUP and Independence hoped to have an overwhelming majority in the forthcoming elections that would enable it to rule the country, the co-domini were anxious that the future status of the Sudan should be in harmony with their views and interests, i.e. independence from Britain and a form of union between Egypt and the Sudan for Egypt.<sup>127</sup>

Egyptian attempts to influence the Sudanese electorate had started before the elections, and were apparently responsible to some extent for the victory of the NUP in the general elections. The sweeping National Unionist Party's victory in the general elections had, however, increased Egyptian influence in the Sudan, and consequently persuaded the British to think of a new device to check it. While the Egyptian Government believed that intensive propaganda would push the Sudanese towards unity, the British had apparently felt that a friendly attitude towards the NUP Government and a strict adherence to the terms of the Agreement may eventually persuade the Sudanese to choose complete independence. S. Lloyd, the British Minister of State maintained:

The Governor-General, who is not an optimist, now feels more hopeful about developments, in the Sudan, and believes that, if Her Majesty's Government continue to exercise patience in the carrying out of the Anglo-Egyptian Agreement our position will be increasingly strengthened.<sup>128</sup>

The Sudanization Commission stipulated in the 12 February Agreement completed its mission by the end of 1954. Being disappointed with the support that the Sudanese political parties had given during the negotiations to the views of the Egyptian Government, the Governor-General argued, before the completion of work of the Sudanization Commission, that the sooner the disappearance of the British element from Sudan the better. The Sudanese would then face the danger of Egyptian domination, and might consequently opt for complete independence.<sup>129</sup>

Several factors had, however, combined together to strengthen the Independence movement that had ultimately succeeded in attaining complete independence for the Sudan on 1 January 1956. The Egyptian Government followed a policy of open

Egyptian propaganda that alienated the Independent front and caused a split in the NUP while the British campaign was discreet and diplomatic. Egyptian propaganda in the Sudan had markedly increased after the elections and the National Unionist Party's sweeping victory in them. Though the *Umma* Party had first hoped that this propaganda would be short-lived, and that they might eventually be able to form a government, they soon realized the imminent danger of this campaign.<sup>130</sup> The British saw some merit in turning a blind eye to this propaganda as it might demonstrate to the Sudanese that the Egyptians were after all exceeding their limits. D. Riches, the United Kingdom Trade Commissioner in the Sudan, maintained:

It is evident; however, that the Governor-General has no power to stop such visits as there is no physical or administrative obstacle to them. Moreover it may not even be desirable to stop them in view of the Egyptian's consistent tendency to overplaying their hand and thus make their cause unpopular.<sup>131</sup>

The intensive Egyptian propaganda led to an open conflict within the ranks of the NUP over the future relations with Egypt. The roots of these differences were already there as this party was originally an amalgamation of several Unionist parties which each had its own views on unity. Beside this, the *Khatmiyya* were presumably not for unity, though they wanted to preserve good relations with Egypt. The *Khatmiyya*'s three ministers in the cabinet<sup>132</sup> were the first group within the NUP to publicly disassociate itself from unity. They emphasized that they stood for sovereignty and independence for the Sudan, and for cooperation with Egypt on an equal basis.<sup>133</sup> Apart from this firm declaration, al-Dirdeeri Muhammad 'Uthman, a leading *Khatmi* and one of the two Sudanese members in the Governor-General's Commission, on different occasions told both S. Lloyd and Salah Salim that the Constituent Assembly would opt for complete independence.<sup>134</sup>

Despite his decision to dismiss the three *Khatmiyya* ministers from his cabinet, Prime Minister Azhari indicated that his government was not a mere tool in Egyptian hands. This was especially demonstrated by his acceptance of an official invitation to visit Britain in November 1954,<sup>135</sup> which had apparently been carefully chosen to coincide with the intense Egyptian propaganda in the Sudan. The British seemed to have believed that this visit would give them a unique opportunity to persuade Azhari that they could be relied upon to help in the realization of an independent Sudan.<sup>136</sup> The Egyptians had attacked Azhari and his delegation, and claimed that the British had influenced them to seek independence.<sup>137</sup> The situation was further complicated when, in May 1955, al-Azhari told Nasser that unity was no longer contemplated by any of the major Sudanese political parties.<sup>138</sup>

Azhari and his colleagues had originally advocated unity not as an end in itself but as a means towards independence. Indeed Azhari was reported to have expressed such views in a conversation that he had with Luce, political advisor to the Governor-General, in early 1954. Azhari reportedly told Luce:

You must not suppose that anyone in his senses, having thrown off one master would put himself under a new master. Most people in the country have for some time felt that it would be easier and more practical to ally themselves

temporarily with Egypt in order to get rid of the British. But that did not mean that they wished to put themselves under the Egyptians.<sup>139</sup>

The extensive Egyptian propaganda during 1953–54 makes us wonder whether the new Egyptian leaders were really genuine in their intention to give the Sudanese the right for self-determination or whether this was a mere tactical move, and that the Egyptian unionist policy had not really changed. It is of course difficult to give a clear-cut answer to this question. But to say outright that they were not genuine would presumably be unfair as they had anyway undertaken the risk and gave the Sudanese the right to choose between independence or a form of union with Egypt. The provision of ‘choosing to link the Sudan with Egypt in any form’ may itself be significant vis-à-vis the old Egyptian position that insisted on undisputed Egyptian sovereignty over the Sudan. The new Egyptian leaders had changed the old policy of linking the Sudan question to that of evacuation; and had at the end accepted, though presumably reluctantly, the decision of the Sudanese Parliament to declare the country’s independence. They should therefore be credited for these bold and courageous decisions that had exposed them to bitter attack and accusations from many Egyptian circles. This was most likely one of the reasons for the subsequent political unrest in Egypt itself which ended with the dissolution of political parties.<sup>140</sup> But to say that they were absolutely sincere in their new approach may not at the same time be wholly accurate. They were not helpful in providing the free and neutral atmosphere that was a prerequisite for self-determination.

However Salah Salim, the Minister of Sudanese Affairs, was the one to be blamed for the extensive Egyptian propaganda. By the end of August 1955 it was apparent that there was division within the Egyptian Government over the Sudan and he was compelled to resign and Nasser himself took over the directions of Egypt’s Sudanese policy, indicating a definite change in Egypt’s programme.<sup>141</sup>

One of the factors which had persuaded the *Umma* Party to sign the 29 October 1925 Agreement with the Egyptian Government was the ‘Gentleman’s Agreement’ between the party and the Egyptian Government. One of the provisions of this Agreement was the pledge of Egypt to provide ‘a free and neutral atmosphere’ during the elections and the transitional period.<sup>142</sup> The Egyptian Government failed to respect this pledge and the *Umma* Party reckoned on the idea of an Independence block which was seriously entertained after the elections.

The victory of the National Unionist Party in the elections had seriously disturbed the *Umma* Party which was determined to prevent union with Egypt by all means. They seized the opportunity of the ceremonial opening of Parliament, which was scheduled for 1 March 1954 and to which Nagib was invited, to show this.<sup>143</sup> Sayyid ‘Abd al-Rahman was reported to have openly said that a demonstration by the *Ansar* on this occasion was essential for the sake of the Independence cause.<sup>144</sup> Nagib was, however, secretly taken from the airport to the Governor-General’s Palace and a bloody clash between the *Ansar* and the police consequently took place. Thirty-four persons were killed, amongst them the British Commander of Khartoum Police.

To put it into its proper perspective, this incident, as Riches had correctly minuted, had ‘been simply no more than a demonstration which went wrong but quite obviously its effects [were] deep and far reaching’.<sup>145</sup> The Governor-General declared a constitutional emergency under the Sudan Defence Law of 1939 and not Article 102 of the Statute. He appears to have realized that the latter course would inevitably lead to the suspension of the Council of Ministers and Parliament, and consequently unnecessarily complicate his newly-friendly relations with the Sudanese Government.

The *Umma* Party had presumably decided to exploit these bloody events to the maximum. When Azhari requested Sayyid ‘Abd al-Rahman to issue a statement in which he would support the government and urge the *Ansar* to be quiet, the Sayyid agreed to consider the latter, but refused to support the government until it came out clearly for Independence.<sup>146</sup> Azhari had apparently got the message. Adams wrote: ‘The events of March 1 may have proved to the Government that it would be suicidal to seek complete union with Egypt because the *Ansar* would resist with force and this might lead to renewed foreign intervention.’<sup>147</sup>

Historian P.M. Holt maintains a similar view. He argues that these events had shown the government that unity with Egypt could only be achieved at a great cost, perhaps civil war.<sup>148</sup> The *Umma* Party had also tried to exploit these events to persuade the British to denounce the Agreement and unilaterally declare the independence of the Sudan.<sup>149</sup> While refusing to do this, the British advised the *Umma* Party to organize itself on a broad political basis, and to form a coherent Independence Front.<sup>150</sup> Since the end of 1954, the *Umma* Party had been seriously engaged in this, and the Independence Front was consequently formed in early 1955.<sup>151</sup> It was composed of the *Umma* Party, the Anti-Colonial Front, the Independence Republican Party<sup>152</sup> and the Republican Party. Its formation seems to have encouraged Azhari to issue in May 1955 his famous statement that the Sudan is an independent republic with full sovereignty.<sup>153</sup>

Disturbances in the south in August 1955<sup>154</sup> had encouraged the government to work for a short-cut in the constitutional arrangements for self-determination. Though the agreement had provided that the future of the Sudan should be decided by an elected Constituent Assembly to choose between complete independence or a form of union with Egypt, the government argued that a general plebiscite would be more appropriate and democratic.<sup>155</sup> Though the co-domini agreed to amend the Agreement to this effect, many influential Sudanese quarters argued that the call for complete independence had become so popular that Parliament should go ahead and declare this. They suspected that the International Commission to be formed for supervising the plebiscite might delay the whole process of self-determination if it felt that the atmosphere was not conducive for holding a general plebiscite. The issue was, however, finally settled when Parliament unanimously voted on 19 December 1955 that:

We, members of House of Representatives in Parliament assembled, declare in the name of the Sudanese people, that Sudan is to become a fully independent sovereign state and request your Excellency [i.e. the Governor-General] to ask the two Condominium powers to recognize this declaration forthwith.

In conclusion, the Sudanese factor had imposed itself on the co-domini since the formation of the Graduates General Congress in 1938 and the Sudanese political parties in the mid-1940s. It benefited from the rivalry of the co-domini over the Sudan and frustrated their plans to determine the future of the country. The breakthrough provided by the military coup in Egypt and the practical approach of its leaders for the Sudan question deprived the British of hegemony over the Sudan. The unanimity of action among the Sudanese was crucial when they signed the 10 January 1953 Agreement and when they declared complete independence from within the Parliament on 19 December 1955.

## Notes

1. In the mid-1930s Britain was in great need of a treaty with Egypt to secure its vital strategic interests. This need increased with the Abyssinian crisis of 1935. The crossroads of imperial communications were now threatened by Italy. Egypt could be used as a base for attacks on Italian East Africa and Libya. This change in the international situation and the British need for the support of Egypt led to the signing of the 1936 Anglo-Egyptian Treaty. The Sudanese nationalists were disappointed because of their exclusion from the 1936 negotiations. They were angered by the vague phrase that appeared in article 11 about the Sudan which stated that the primary objective of the co-domini was the welfare of the Sudanese.
2. For details about the formation of Graduates General Congress see: A.A. Hasabo, *Factional Conflict in the Sudanese Nationalist Movement 1918–1948* (Graduate College Publications, No.12, University of Khartoum, 1985).
3. For details about the Sudan clause in the 1936 Treaty see H.A. Ibrahim, *The 1936 Anglo-Egyptian Treaty* (Khartoum: Khartoum University Press, 1976).
4. The Future of the Sudan, a Note by Governor-General's Office, 12 Sept. 1945, Public Record Office 371/45984 (hereinafter PRO FO).
5. M. 'Abd al-Rahim, *Imperialism and Nationalism in the Sudan: A Study in Constitutional and Political Development, 1899–1956* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969), p.127.
6. This split in the Sudanese nationalist movement was enhanced by the move of Douglas Newbold, Civil Secretary Sudan Government, who managed to convince some Sudanese nationalists of the gradual process towards self-government with the help of the British. Two main political parties were formed: the *Ashiqqa* (literally brothers) Party under the patronage of Sayyid 'Ali AlMirghani, leader of the *Khatmiyya* sect, and the *Umma* (literally nation) Party under the patronage of Sayyid 'Abdel Rahman al-Mahdi. The latter supported the Sudan Government's policy of gradual process towards self-government (see Hasabo, *Factional Conflict in the Sudanese Nationalist Movement*).
7. G.R. Warburg, *Islam Nationalism and Communism in a Traditional Society The Case of Sudan* (London: Frank Cass, 1978), p.70.
8. A.A. Taha, *Al Sudan Lil Sudaniyyin*, edited by F.A.A. Taha (Khartoum: Khartoum University Press, 1992), p.64.
9. J. Robertson, *Transition in Africa from Direct Rule to Independence* (London: C Hurst 1974), p.95.
10. British Embassy, Cairo, to Foreign Office, 2 April 1946, PRO FO 371/53251.
11. Ibid.
12. Huddleston, Governor-General, Khartoum to Campbell, British Ambassador, Cairo, 4 April 1946, PRO FO 371/53251.
13. For details about these negotiations see: F.A.A. Taha, *The Anglo-Egyptian Dispute over the Sudan 1937–1947* (Khartoum: Khartoum University Print, 2006). See also R. Ginat, 'Egypt's Efforts to Unite the Nile Valley', *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol.43, No.2 (2007), pp.197–9.
14. The Unionists' delegation composed of Ismai'l Al-Azhari, Dirdeiri 'Ahmad Isma'il, Ibrahim Al-Mufti, and Tawfiq Al-Bakri. They were later joined by Hamid Salih and Umar Al-Khalia. The Independents' delegation composed of Muhammed Ahmed Mahjoub Siddiq AlMahdi, Abdalla Khalil and Muhammed Salih AlShingitti.
15. Hasabo, *Factional Conflict in the Sudanese Nationalist Movement*, p.138.

16. M.W. Daly, *Imperial Sudan The Anglo-Egyptian Condominium, 1934–1956* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1991), p.229.
17. See *Waqa'i Jalssat Majlis al-Amn al-Mun'aqida fi Lak Scosseks Lil Nazar fil Niza'e al-Ingлизi al-Misri, 1947* (Khartoum: MacorCodale, no date, 1947?). See also *Al-Sudan Min 13 Fabrayir 1841 to 12 Fabrayir 1841*, published by the Egyptian Government (Cairo: Al-Math'a' al-Ameeri'a, 1953). This book contains published documents concerned with the Anglo-Egyptian Conflict over the Sudan.
18. British Embassy, Cairo, to Foreign Office, 20 Nov. 1950, PRO FO 371/80342.
19. A bill regulating the Sudan future constitution was issued. It confirmed King Farouq as King of the Sudan, and provided for a Constituent Assembly, an electoral law, and a separate council of ministers for the Sudan. The King should have power to dissolve the chambers and dismiss the council of ministers and to endorse all legislations. (Egypt Fortnightly Political Summary, 20 Oct.–4 Nov. 1951, PRO FO 371/90109).
20. British Embassy, Washington, to Foreign Office, referring to an article in the *New York Times*, 23 Oct. 1951, PRO FO 371/90154.
21. The US Government had, however, continued to argue that the only solution for the Anglo-Egyptian dispute was the recognition of Egyptian sovereignty over the Sudan. They went to the extent of sending an American delegation to the Sudan to explore its peoples' response to the question of the King's title. (British Embassy, Washington, to Foreign Office, 2 Feb. 1952, PRO FO 371/96902).
22. Sudan Political Intelligence Summary, No.4 of April and May 1952, PRO FO 371/96846.
23. Governor-General, Khartoum to Foreign Office, 13 June 1952, PRO FO 371/96906.
24. G.R. Warburg, 'Sources of the Nile and Egyptian–Sudanese Relations', *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol.43, No.3 (May 2007), p.477.
25. Muhammad Nagib was the leader of the Revolutionary Command Council until his dismissal in November 1954. He was born in the Sudan and received his education there until he graduated from Gordon Memorial College in 1916. He entered the Military College in Cairo in 1917, and served as officer in the Egyptian Army in the Sudan until 1924.
26. British Embassy, Cairo, to Foreign Office, Summary of Statements made by Neguib since the coup d'état, 23 Aug. 1952, PRO FO 371/96880.
27. British Embassy, Cairo to Foreign Office, 9 Sept. 1952, PRO FO 371/96885.
28. The draft Self-Government Statute was sent by the Sudan Government in May 1952 to the Egyptian and the British Governments for their approval.
29. *Al Sharq al-Awsat*, No.2496 of 28 Sept. 1985. A series of articles about Salah Salim and the Sudan were published in this newspaper. These are not memoirs in the real sense but a collection of what some of Salim's friends and colleagues kept from him concerning the Sudan. They are series of articles under the title 'Salah Salim wal Sudan'.
30. Ibid.
31. A. Nutting, *Nasser* (London: Constable, 1972), pp.34–5.
32. British Embassy, Cairo, to Foreign Office, 10 Sept. 1952, PRO FO 371/96880. Nagib assumed the office of Prime Minister as a result of Ali Mahir's resignation, due to differences on the question of the Agrarian Reform Law and Mahir's protest against the arrest of political leaders.
33. British Embassy, Cairo, to Foreign Office, transmits Egypt's Political Summary of 10–23 Sept. 1952, PRO FO 371/96848.
34. British Embassy, Cairo, to Foreign Office, Joint Appreciation of the Egyptian Situation by the British and US Embassies, 20 Sept. 1952, PRO FO 371/96892.
35. British Embassy, Cairo, to Foreign Office, 19 Sept. 1952, PRO FO 371/96986.
36. Governor-General, Khartoum, to Foreign Office, 22 Sept. 1952, PRO FO 371/96909.
37. *The World Today*, Vol.VII, No.12 (Dec. 1951), pp.499–500.
38. *Al-Sharq Al Awsat*, No.1506, 8 Oct. 1985.
39. Sudan Legislative Assembly Proceedings, 1st Assembly, 3rd Session, pp.95–1042 (deposited in the National Records Office, Khartoum).
40. M.A. Mahjoub, *Democracy on Trial: Reflections on Arab and African Politics* (London: Andre Deutsch, 1974), pp.51–6.
41. Sayyid 'Abd al-Rahman al-Mahdi.
42. Robertson, Civil Secretary, Sudan Government, to Davies, Sudan Agency, London, 12 Dec. 1952, SAD The Robertson's Papers, No. 523/4/41.

43. Taha, *Al Sudan Lil Sudaniyyin*, p.141. A.A. Taha was a member of Sayyid 'Abd al-Rahman's delegation to London.
44. A.R. Al-Mahdi, *Jihad fi Sabil al-Istiqbal* (Khartoum: Al-Matb'a al-Hukomiyya, 1964), p.70.
45. Governor-General Khartoum to Foreign Office, 5 Oct. 1952, PRO FO 371/96909.
46. Report of a meeting between the Secretary of State and S.A.R. al-Mahdi, 11 Oct. 1952, PRO FO 371/96910.
47. Ibid.
48. *Al-Sudan al-Gadid*, No.1669, 28 July 1952.
49. Al-Mahdi, *Jihad fi Sabil al-Istiqbal*, p.96.
50. The delegates in these negotiations were: 'Abdullahi al-Fadil, 'Abd al-Rahman 'Abdoun, Ya'qoub 'Uthman, 'Abd al-Rahman 'Ali Taha (for the *Umma* Party), Muhammed Salih AlShingeiti, Muhammed Ahmed Mahjoub and Ahmed Yousif Hashim (for the Independents), Ayoub bey 'Abd al-Magid and Mirghani Ussein Zaki al-Dein as representatives of tribal chiefs. Ziyada Arbab was the Secretary of this delegation.
51. Mahjoub, *Democracy on Trial*, p.51. It is interesting to note that these conversations started while 'Ali Mahir was Premier. It also indicates why 'Ali Mahir was chosen as a member of the Egyptian delegation that signed the agreement with the Independents.
52. Sanhouri was a prominent Egyptian Jurist and his appointment as a member of the Egyptian delegation seems to have been due to his long legal experience. Other members of this delegation were Muhammad Nagib, Salah Salim, Husayn zul fagar Sabri and 'Ali Mahir.
53. For the full text of this letter see Taha, *Al Sudan Lil Sudaniyyin*, pp.151-4.
54. Sudan Legislative Assembly Proceedings, 1st Assembly, 3rd Session, p.971 (deposited in the National Records Office, Khartoum).
55. Agreement between the Independence Front and the Egyptian Government, 29 Oct. 1952, PRO FO 371/96912.
56. Ibid.
57. Ibid. Some constituencies in the south were to hold direct elections such as Wau, Juba and Malakal.
58. Governor-General, Khartoum, to Foreign Office, 4 Jan. 1949, PRO FO 371/73472.
59. Pro-Khatmiya political parties were Hizb al-Gabha al-Wataniyya (the National Front Party) and, Hizb al-Ittihadiyyin (the Unionist Party).
60. This commission was formed in April 1951 to recommend amendments to the Legislative Assembly and the Executive Council Ordinance. Its membership included the *Umma* Party, Hizb al-Gabha al-Wataniyya, Hizb al-Ittihadiyyin, one southerner and one tribal chief beside independent personalities. It disintegrated following the abrogation of the Wafd government for the Condominium Agreements and the 1936 Treaty.
61. The political programme of this party as mentioned by Robertson, seemed to have suited the Sudan Government. It asked for full self-government in 1952, while self-determination would wait for a future convenient time, a democratic republican regime, and the Sudan membership of the Commonwealth of Nations. But, under rising pressure from the Independence movement, the party subsequently demanded in early 1952 immediate self-government and self-determination, i.e. before the end of 1953 (Formation of Socialist Republican Party: Letter from C.G. Davies to R. Allen, Foreign Office, enclosing extract from a letter from Sir J. Robertson, sent 17 Nov. 1951, 3.12.1951 PRO FO 371/90114.
62. *Al-Sudan al-Gadid*, No.1723, 9 Oct. 1952.
63. Sudan Political Intelligence Summary, Oct.-Nov. 1952, PRO FO 371/96948.
64. Ibid.
65. Ibid.
66. Ibid.
67. Agreement between the Socialist Republican Party and the Egyptian Government, 3 Nov. 1952, PRO FO 371/96912.
68. H. Sabri, *Sovereignty For Sudan* (London: Ithaca Press, 1983), p.61. Sabri was a member of the Egyptian delegation which negotiated with the Sudanese Political Parties and with the British during the 1952-53 negotiations. Later he became the Egyptian member in the Governor-General's Commission.
69. Ibid., p.93.
70. Report of a meeting between the Secretary of State and S.A.R. al-Mahdi, 10 Oct. 1952, PRO FO 371/96910.

71. Governor-General, Khartoum, to Foreign Office, 25 Sept. 1952, PRO FO 371/96909.
72. Governor-General, Khartoum to Foreign Office, 8 Oct. 1952, PRO FO 371/96909.
73. Muhammad Amin Husayn, a member of the *Ashiqqa* Party, claimed that he was a member of the Unionists' delegation that visited London. He added that the Egyptian Government had sent an urgent message to this delegation requested it to stop all propaganda against Sayyid 'Abd al-Rahman (see *Mashru' Tarikh al-Haraka al-Wataniyya fil Sudan: Muqablat Ruwwad al-Haraka al-Wataniyya*, Vol.I, p.53, Institute of Afro-Asian Studies, University of Khartoum, 1985).
74. For the Ashiqqa's two factions, Azhari and Nur al-Dein were appointed. Dirdeeri Muhammad 'Uthman represented the National Front Party, Hamad Tawfiq the Ittihadiyyin and 'Ali al-Bireir the Unity of the Nile Valley Party.
75. R. Al-Barawy, *The Military Coup in Egypt* (Cairo: Renaissance Bookshop, 1952), pp.267–8.
76. For the full text of the Unionists' proposals on the Statute, see K. Hamad, *Mudhakirat Khidir Hamad, al-Haraka al-Wataniyya al-Sudaniyya, al-Istiqlal wa ma Ba'dahu* (Al Shariqa: Maktabat al-Sharg wal gharb, 1980), pp.164–8.
77. Al-Barawy, *The Military Coup in Egypt*, pp.267–9.
78. Hamad, *Mudhakirat Khidir Hamad*, p.168. According to Mahmud al-Fadli, a prominent unionist, some Unionists, amongst whom was Ahmad Khayr, refused to accept this agreement as they were against any settlement under the then existing administration, and returned home in protest. But Azhari went along with this agreement arguing that they had previously successfully contested a number of elections in similar circumstances, e.g. the Congress and the municipal elections. Besides this, the agreement, Azhari argued, provided for international commission to supervise the elections. *Mashru' Tarikh al-Haraka al-Wataniyya fil Sudan: Muqablat Ruwwad al-Haraka al-Wataniyya*, Vol.II, p.231, Institute of Afro-Asian Studies, University of Khartoum, 1985 (Project of the Sudanese Nationalist Movement: Interviews with Leading Nationalists).
79. Hamad, *Mudhakirat Khidir Hamad*, p.168.
80. *Al-Sudan al-Gadid*, No.1742, 3 Nov. 1952.
81. British Ambassador, Cairo to Foreign Office, 16 Oct. 1952, PRO FO 371/96910.
82. Governor-General Khartoum to Foreign Office, 15 Oct. 1952, PRO FO 371/96910.
83. B.M. Sa'id, *The Sudan Crossroad of Africa* (London: The Bodley Head, 1965), p.73.
84. Legislative Assembly of the Sudan, Weekly Digest of Proceedings First Assembly, Third Session, pp.957–1000 (deposited in the National Records Office, Khartoum).
85. British Ambassador, Cairo, to Foreign Office, 21 Oct. 1952, PRO FO 371/69610.
86. Governor-General , Khartoum, to Foreign Office, 29 Oct. 1952, PRO FO 371/96911.
87. Ibid.
88. Governor-General, Khartoum to Foreign Office, 31 Oct. 1952, PRO FO 371/96910.
89. Foreign Office Minute, Comment on the Egyptian Note, 14 Nov. 1952, PRO FO 371/96911.
90. Governor-General to Foreign Office, 7 Nov. 1952, PRO FO 371/96911.
91. Copy of a letter from Acting Civil Secretary, Sudan Government, to Governors of Sudan Provinces, 16 Nov. 1952, S.A.D. The Robertson's Papers, No. 521/1/64–65.
92. L.S. Sanderson and G.N Sanderson, *Education, Religion and Politics in Southern Sudan 1899–1964* (Khartoum: Khartoum University Press, 1981), p.313.
93. Governor-General to Foreign Office, 6 Dec. 1952, PRO FO 371/69615.
94. Foreign Office to Governor-General, 17 Dec. 1952, PRO FO 371/69616.
95. Foreign Office to Governor-General, 6 Dec. 1952, PRO FO 371/69614.
96. Governor-General to Foreign Office, 21 Dec. 1952, PRO FO 371/96914.
97. British Embassy, Cairo, to Foreign Office, 2 Dec. 1952, PRO FO 371/69614.
98. Salim was accompanied in this visit by 'Ahmed Hassan al-Baqouri, Minister of Awqaf, and 'Abd al-Fattah Hasan, Commander of the Egyptian Troops in the Sudan.
99. Foreign Office to British Embassy, Cairo, 8 Dec. 1952, PRO FO 371/96915.
100. Governor-General to Foreign Office 23 Dec. 1952, PRO FO 371/69617.
101. Governor-General to Foreign Office, 13 Jan. 1953, PRO FO 371/102737.
102. Governor-General to Foreign Office, 31 Dec. 1952, PRO FO 371/102736.
103. Foreign Office to Governor-General, 1 Jan. 1953, PRO FO 371/102736
104. Sabri, *Sovereignty for the Sudan*, p.112.
105. British Embassy, Cairo, to Foreign Office, 12 Jan. 1953, PRO FO 371/102737. A month after the signature of the Agreement, Sudanese political parties had officially complained about certain

- practices by some British administrators in the south. They attached to this note a protest copies of telegrams signed by southerners in which they claimed that they were badly treated by certain British officials because of the support they gave to Salim during his tour to the South (see Governor-General to Foreign Office enclosing a petition sent by leaders of the Sudanese political parties to the Governor-General, 12 March 1953, PRO FO 371/102752).
106. Governor-General to Foreign Office, 29 Dec. 1952, PRO FO 371/96917.
  107. D.M. Uthman, *Mudhakirati 1914–1958* (Khartoum: Matba'at al-Tamdu, 1961), pp.65–7.
  108. Sabri, *Sovereignty for the Sudan*, pp.117–18.
  109. Governor-General to Foreign Office, enclosing text of agreement reached between Major Salah Salim and representatives of the Umma, Socialist Republican, the National Unionist and National Parties, 11 Jan. 1953, PRO FO 371/102737.
  110. Foreign Office to Governor-General, 13 Jan. 1953, PRO FO 371/102737.
  111. Governor-General to Foreign Office, 18 Jan. 1953, PRO FO 371/102738.
  112. H. MacMichael, *The Sudan* (London: Benn, 1954), pp.216–17.
  113. Governor-General to Foreign Office, 13 Jan. 1953, PRO FO 371/102737.
  114. Ibid.
  115. Foreign Office Minute: Sudan, 12 Jan. 1953, PRO FO 371/102737.
  116. Daly, *Imperial Sudan*, p.353.
  117. Governor-General to Foreign Office, 17 Jan. 1953, PRO FO 371/102738.
  118. Foreign Office to Governor-General, 15 Jan. 1953, PRO FO 371/102738.
  119. Response of Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to questions raised in the House of Commons, 20 Jan. 1953, PRO FO 371/102739.
  120. G.R. Warburg, *Egypt and the Sudan: Studies in History and Politics* (London: Frank Cass, 1985), p.26.
  121. Governor-General to Foreign Office, 30 Jan. 1953, PRO FO 371/102740.
  122. Ibid.
  123. Foreign Office Minute, 2 Feb. 1953, PRO FO 371/102740.
  124. Foreign Office Minute, 2 Feb. 1953, PRO FO 371/102740
  125. Warburg, *Egypt and the Sudan: Studies in History and Politics*, p.52.
  126. Robertson to Davies, Sudan Agency, London, 13 Feb. 1953, S.A.D. Robertson Papers, No. 523/7/1.
  127. Article 10 of the 1953 Agreement stated that the Sudanese Government should draw up a draft law for the election of a Constituent Assembly to decide the future of the Sudan: either by choosing a link with Egypt in any form or opting for complete independence.
  128. The Sudan: Memorandum by the Minister of State, 7 Aug. 1954, P.R.O. Cabinet 129, 70C (54)- 267.
  129. Governor-General to Foreign Office, 29 March 1954, PRO FO 371/108340.
  130. Riches to Foreign Office, 29 Jan. 1954, PRO FO 371/108312.
  131. Riches to Foreign Office, 29 Jan. 1954, PRO FO 371/108351.
  132. They were Mirghani Hamza, Ahmad Gali and Khalafalla Khalid. They were dismissed from Azhari's cabinet on 26 Dec. 1954. They claimed that their dismissal had been influenced by Salah Salim because of the strong stand Hamza had taken in protecting the Sudan's interest in the Egyptian Sudanese discussions on the Nile Waters. (Adams, United Kingdom Trade Commissioner to Eden, 31 Dec. 1954, PRO FO371/113581/6) Hamza served as Minister of Irrigation until his dismissal.
  133. Adams to Foreign Office, 20 Dec. 1954, PRO FO 371/108326. Adams replaced Riches as the United Kingdom Trade Commissioner in the Sudan in July 1954.
  134. Conversation between S. Lloyd and Dirdeeri M. 'Uthman, 8 March 1954, PRO FO 371/108322.
  135. Sudan Fortnightly Political Summary, 26 Sept.–8 Oct. 1954. The idea of inviting Azhari to visit Britain was entertained since mid 1954, PRO FO 371/108314.
  136. Foreign Office to Adams, 18 Aug. 1954, PRO FO 371/108559.
  137. Hamad, *Mudhakirat Khidir Hamad*, p.216.
  138. *New York Times*, 2 June 1955, p.8.
  139. Luce, Governor-General's Political Advisor to Foreign Office enclosing a note of a recent conversation with Azhari, 18 Feb. 1954, PRO FO 371/108344.
  140. *The World Today*, 10 May 1954, pp.188–9.
  141. T.Y. Ismael, 'The United Arab Republic and the Sudan', *The Middle East Journal*, Vol.XXIII (1969), p.19.
  142. For the full text of this agreement see Taha, *Al Sudan Lil Sudaniyyin*, pp.161–4.

143. Riches to Foreign Office, 13 March, 1953, PRO FO 371/108312.
144. Ibid.
145. Governor-General's Office, Summary of events of the riot on 1 March 1954, dated 4 March 1954, PRO FO 371/108322.
146. Governor-General to Foreign Office: Meeting between Azhari and the Mahdi on 26 March 1954, PRO FO 371/108322.
147. Adams to Foreign Office, 24 July 1954, PRO FO 371/108324.
148. P.M. Holt, 'Sudanese Nationalism and Self-Determination', Part II, *The Middle East Journal*, Vol.10 (1956), pp.239–47.
149. Adams, United Kingdom Trade Commissioner, Khartoum, to Foreign Office, 24 July 1954 PRO FO 371/108324.
150. Foreign Office Minute, 9 April 1954, PRO FO 371/108322.
151. Taha, *Al Sudan Lil Sudaniyyin*, p.145.
152. Mirghani Hamza and his colleagues formed this party after their dismissal from Azhari's Cabinet. The Anti-Colonial Front was an offshoot of the Sudanese Movement for National Liberation that was formed in 1946. This Movement built strong influence among labourers and students and caused a lot of troubles for the British Administration in the Sudan during 1950–52. The Republican Party was formed in 1945 calling for complete independence from the two condominium powers.
153. Taha, *Al Sudan Lil Sudaniyyin*, p.205.
154. Disturbances broke out at Torit in Equatoria province in the south, rejecting a decision for withdrawal to Khartoum. Many northerners lost their lives during the mutiny.
155. It is reported that the idea of a plebiscite was originally suggested by Sayyid 'Ali al-Mirghani, and that Sayyid 'Abd al-Rahman agreed to it because he felt that the Sudanese people were on the whole strongly for independence.